(TUFS). The Small Scale Textile Industry including powerloom have been given an additional option under TUFS, either to avail 12% Credit Linked Capital Subsidy or claim 5% interest reimbursement on the loans raised from banks/financial institutions for their projects of modernization. Soft loan for margin money are also available from National Equity Fund maintained with SIDBI. To help the weavers, Central Government funded Powerloom Service Centres (PSCs) located at 44 powerloom clusters in different States are providing facilitation, technical advice, training, testing etc.

Jute mills in the country

2194. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) how many jute mills are in the country as on 31st March, 2002 and 31st October, 2002;

(b) the reasons of closures in a good number of jute mills; and

(c) the remedial measures taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI BASANGOUDA R. PATIL): (a) There were 76 jute mills in the country as on 31st March, 2002 and as on 31st October, 2002 respectively.

(b) As on date, six jute mills are closed. The main reasons of closure of these jute mills are high labour cost, erosion in demand, obsolete machinery and uneconomical workings including high cost of production.

(c) The Government is considering to launch a Jute Technology Mission (JTM) with the objective to strengthen agricultural research and technology development, extension and transfer of improved technology, development of efficient market linkage for raw jute and modernization, technological Upgradation, productivity improvement, diversification and development of human resources for the jute industry. In addition, the Government also provides financial assistance to jute industry under the Technological Upgradation Fund Schemes (TUFS).